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Drawings by Al Hirschfeld

From the Melvin R. Seiden Collection

June 6 through September 8, 2002

The Pierpont Morgan Library

29 East Thirty-sixth Street
New York City 10016

Drawings by Al Hirschfeld

From the Melvin R. Seiden Collection

In the Harvard Theatre Collection
and the Fogg Art Museum
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

An Exhibition

Originated by

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and

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Al Hirschfeld

Al Hirschfeld was born in St. Louis in 1903. In 1915, with the emergence of his youthful talent, his family moved to New York City to further his studies. While still a teenager he designed advertising and publicity material, first for the Goldwyn Studios and then as art director for Selznick Pictures. At 21 he left for Europe, and after leading *la vie de bohème* he returned to New York in 1926. Before long his drawings were being published in several newspapers, including the *Herald Tribune* and the *Times*.

Since 1928, Mr. Hirschfeld's work has been seen most often in *The New York Times*, where his drawings still appear, usually in the front pages of the Sunday Arts and Leisure section. His work has preserved for us and for the ages the events of the arts world—especially the openings of new plays and the appearances of artists who have enriched, or rather who have constituted, the cultural life of this city. Over the past seventy-five years he has also witnessed broad cultural trends: the growth and maturation of American theater, the heyday of the Broadway musical, the ascent of Off-Broadway theater, and the appearance of resident production companies such as the Public, Roundabout, and Lincoln Center Theaters. The performing arts have spread uptown, downtown, and all around the town, and wherever the arts have gone, Hirschfeld has been to describe these happenings to us. The moment of a performance preserved by his pen is often a perfect capsule review.

It has been said that on Broadway there are two certain proofs of fame: seeing your name in lights and being drawn by Hirschfeld. It is the ultimate compliment. Hirschfeld's portraits are so witty and deft that they may be thought of as caricatures, but there is not a jot of the ulterior motive of caricature, and not a penstroke of meanness. It is unlikely that anyone could fail to identify his portraits of Ed Wynn, or Orson Welles, or Hal Prince, who could recognize those personages in a photograph; and yet in only a line or two he can tell us volumes about his subject.

To Hirschfeld, a blank sheet of illustration board represents a puzzle waiting to be solved, and he is still happiest drawing at his barber's chair in his fourth-floor studio. Many of the greatest artists develop a style that becomes easily recognizable, yet what a world of invention and variety may exist within that style. It is easy enough to recognize a sonata by Beethoven, perhaps, but there is a vast breadth of imagination and depth of artistry within that repertory. So too, it is no difficult matter to recognize a Hirschfeld drawing from across a room, but in concept and construction his work represents a bottomless fount of variety and inspiration that leaves the observer in a state of wonder at the richness of his imagination. The present exhibition is representative of the range of Hirschfeld's styles, from an early portrait of Ethel Waters, with cubist influences, to the highly detailed middle-period scenes and book illustrations, to the later, often sparer portrait drawings, such as the minimalist masterpiece of John Lithgow in *M. Butterfly.*

All of the work seen in this exhibition has been collected by Melvin R. Seiden, and given over a period of many years to the Harvard Theatre Collection and the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard University. This exhibition represents the range of that collection, including portraits, production scenes, book illustrations, political drawings, original sketchbooks that Mr. Hirschfeld carried to the theater, and even the complex "Season in the Arts" composite portraits that so entertained readers of the *Times* a few times each year. Among the 45 drawings selected from the hundreds in Mr. Seiden's collection are the Wrst Hirschfeld drawing he obtained, the 1977 revival of *The Man of La Mancha,* and one of his most recent acquisitions, a portrait of Anne Bancroft as the sculptor Louise Nevelson in Edward Albee's play *Occupant.*

In every age there are popular artists who are later seen to have represented their times, in the same way that William Hogarth, George Cruikshank, or Honoré Daumier represented theirs. For ages to come, Hirschfeld will represent twentieth-century theater in America. His work will be recognized longer than the names and

faces of some of his subjects, and it will surely be through his eyes that we will recall countless plays and players of this age. As Mr. Seiden discerned many years ago, Hirschfeld is our Hogarth, our Cruikshank.

Fredric Woodbridge Wilson
Curator, The Harvard Theatre Collection

Drawings by Al Hirschfeld

From the Melvin R. Seiden Collection in the Harvard Theatre Collection and the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Except as noted, drawings are in india ink on illustration board, productions are in New York City, and drawings are in the Harvard Theatre Collection. Height precedes width.

Blue wash in original drawings represents gray halftone shading pattern.

Theatrical Portrait Drawings

Al Hirschfeld. Self-portrait, 1985. Vertical, 27 × 21 in. (68.2 × 53.0 cm.) HTC 3,997.

Irving Berlin. Published in Stereo Review, February 1988. Vertical, 23 1/4 × 19 1/4 in. (59.1 × 48.9 cm.) Color gouache. HTC 4,139.

Ella Fitzgerald. Published in The New York Times, April 25, 1993. Horizontal, 21 × 27 in. (53.0 × 68.3 cm.) HTC 4,001.

Martha Graham. Published in The New York Times, October 4, 1987. Vertical, 27 × 21 in. (68.6 × 53.3 cm.) HTC 4,101.

Arthur Miller. Published in The New York Times, February 1, 1987. Horizontal, 15 × 21 in. (38.5 × 53.3 cm.) HTC 4,088.

Harold Prince. Published in The New York Times, March 23, 1997. Vertical, 27 × 21 in. (68.5 × 53.2 cm.) HTC 4,159.

Professor Peter Schickele. Published in The New York Times, December 21, 1997. Vertical, 27 × 21 in. (68.5 × 53.2 cm.) HTC 5,678.

Orson Welles. Published in The New York Times, January 21, 1996. Vertical, 27 × 21 in. (68.2 × 53.3 cm.) HTC 4,160.

Composite Theatrical Portrait Drawings

"British Playwrights at Work." Simon Gray, David Rudkin, Harold Pinter, Alan Ayckbourn, Trevor Griffiths, Peter Shaffer, and Tom Stoppard.

Published in The New York Times, July 10, 1977. Horizontal, 22 × 30 in. (56.0 × 76.2 cm.) HTC 4,163.

"The New Season in the Arts," Autumn 1980. Composite includes Natalia Makarova, Robert Joffrey, Alvin Ailey, Max Roach, David Byrne, Steely Dan, Woody Allen, Robin Williams, Robert De Niro, Ian McKellen, Julie Harris, Katharine Hepburn, Mike Nichols, Isaac Stern, Ileana Cotrubas, Béla Bartók, Richard Chamberlain, Alec Guinness, and Larry Hagman. Published in The New York Times Magazine, August 24, 1980. Horizontal, 21-1/4 × 28-7/8 in. (54.0 × 73.5 cm.) HTC 4,179. [NOTE: check publication date, December 28, 1980?]

Philip Merivale and Gladys Cooper in *Call it a Day*, Armina Marshall in *If This Be Treason*, Osgood Perkins and Ina Claire in *End of Summer*, Alfred Lunt in *The Taming of the Shrew,* Lynn Fontanne in *Idiot's Delight,* and John W. Bubbles in *Porgy and Bess.* Published in The New York Times, October 20, 1935. India ink with blue wash. Vertical, 22 × 19 in. (56.0 × 48.2 cm.) HTC 4,127.

"Me and the Set." A medley of early television personalities, including Lucille Ball, Desi Arnaz, Imogene Coca, Sid Caesar, Groucho Marx, Bob Hope, Milton Berle, Howdy Doody, and Kukla, Fran, and Ollie. Published in Collier's Magazine, May 27, 1955. India ink with brown gouache border. Horizontal, 21 × 27-1/2 in. (53.5 × 70.0 cm.) HTC 4,075.

Theatrical Production Drawings

Africana, musical revue by Donald Heyward. Ethel Waters. Daly's Theatre, 1927. India ink and crayon. [PUBLICATION] Vertical, 16-3/4 × 13-3/8 in. (42.5 × 34.0 cm.) HTC 4,007.

"The American Ballet Theatre." Alexander Godunov, Martine van Hamel, Anthony Dowell, Natalia Makarova, Fernando Bujones, and Cynthia Gregory. Published in The New York Times, May 4, 1980. Horizontal, 21 × 27 in. (53.4 × 68.8 cm.) Fogg Art Museum. FAM 1988.445.

Aren't We All?, by Frederick Lonsdale. George Rose as the Rev. Ernest Lynton, Lynn Redgrave as the Hon. Mrs. William Tatham, Jeremy Brett as the Hon. William Tatham, Rex Harrison as Lord Grenham, and Claudette Colbert as Lady Frinton. Revival, Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 1985. Published in The New York Times, April 28, 1985. Vertical, 27 × 21 in. (68.5 × 53.2 cm.) HTC 4,073.

Boys and Girls Together, musical by Sammy Fain, Jack Yellen, Irving Kahal, Ed Wynn, and Pat C. Flick. Renée and Antonio de Marcos, Ed Wynn, and Jane Pickens. Philadelphia previews for the Broadhurst Theatre, 1940. India ink with pasted paper, brown crayon, and white gouache. Published in The New York Times, September 29, 1940. Horizontal, 17-7/8 × 22-1/4 in. (45.5 × 56.6 cm.) HTC 4,128.

Cabaret, musical by John Kander, Fred Ebb, and Joe Masteroff. Natasha Richardson as Sally Bowles and Alan Cumming as the M.C. Revival, Roundabout Theatre Company, 1998. Published in The New York Times, March 29, 1998. Horizontal, 21 × 27 in. (53.2 × 68.5 cm.) HTC 5,679.

The Gospel at Colonus, musical by Lee Breuer and Bob Telson. Morgan Freeman as the Narrator, Jevetta Steele as Ishmene, with J. J. Farley and the Soul Stirrers, Clarence Fountain and the Five Blind Boys, and a cast of 65. Revival, Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 1988. Published in The New York Times, March 20, 1988. Vertical, 27 × 21 in. (68.2 × 53.3 cm.) HTC 4,107.

King Lear, by William Shakespeare. Paul Scofield as Lear, John Laurie as Gloucester, Tom Flemming as Kent, Irene Worth as Goneril, and Alec McCowan as the Fool. Royal Shakespeare Company, directed by Peter Brook. American Tour, Boston, 1964. Published in The New York Times, May 17, 1964. Vertical, 27 × 21 in. (68.5 × 48.2 cm.) HTC 4,141.

Laffing Room Only, musical extravaganza by Burton Lane, Ole Olsen, Chic Johnson, and Eugene Conrad. Boston previews for the Winter Garden Theatre, 1944. A sequel to *Helzapoppin*. The comic team of Ole Olsen and Chic Johnson are pictured on stage, while other members of the cast, including Eugene Conrad and Frank Libuse, roam the aisles, boxes, and rows. "A midget hangs from a box; a madman with rabbits screams 'Harvey'; another drops popcorn from the balcony; Frank Libuse mingles insanely with the audience; cash customers, with their pants rolled up, dance in the aisle." The artist has drawn himself into the picture (on the aisle, at left), a victim of antics in the audience. Published in The New York Times, December 17, 1944. Horizontal, 20 × 30 in. (50.7 × 76.2 cm.) HTC 4,066.

A Lie of the Mind, by Sam Shepard. Harvey Keitel as Jake. Promenade Theatre, 1985. Published in The New York Times, December 20, 1985.

Vertical, 27 × 21 in. (68.2 × 53.0 cm.) HTC 4,125.

M. Butterfly, by David Henry Hwang. John Lithgow as René Gallimard. Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 1988. Published in The New York Times, May 27, 1988. Vertical, 27 × 21 in. (68.2 × 53.3 cm.) HTC 4,098.

Man of La Mancha, musical by Mitch Leigh, Joe Darion, and Dale Wasserman. Richard Kiley as Cervantes and Don Quixote, Tony Martinez as Sancho Panza, and Emily Yancy as Aldonza. Revival, Palace Theatre, 1977. Published in The New York Times, September 11, 1977. Vertical, 30-1/4 × 22 in. (78.6 × 56.0 cm.) Fogg Art Museum, FAM 1988.104. (The first Hirschfeld drawing acquired by Mr. Seiden.)

The Member of the Wedding, by Carson McCullers. Julie Harris as Frankie Addams and Ethel Waters as Berenice Sadie Brown. Empire Theatre, 1950. India ink with white gouache. Published in The New York Times, July 30, 1950. Horizontal, 17-3/4 × 19-7/8 in. (45.0 × 50.6 cm.) HTC 4,006.

Metamorphosis, by Steven Berkoff, based on the novella by Franz Kafka. Mikhail Baryshnikov as Gregor Samsa. Ethel Barrymore Theatre, 1989. Published in The New York Times, April 16, 1989. Horizontal, 21 × 27 in. (53.0 × 68.2 cm.) HTC 4,146.

My Fair Lady, musical by Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe. Rex Harrison as Henry Higgins, Cheryl Kennedy as Eliza Doolittle, and Milo O'Shea as Alfred P. Doolittle. Boston previews for the Uris Theatre revival, 1981. Published in The New York Times, August 16, 1981. Horizontal, 21-3/8 × 27 in. (54.3 × 68.5 cm.) HTC 4,067.

Occupant, by Edward Albee. Anne Bancroft as Louise Nevelson. Published in The New York Times, February 17, 2002. Vertical, 27 by 21 inches (68.5 × 53.2 cm.) HTC 11,233.

On Your Toes, musical by Richard Rodgers, Lorenz Hart, and George Abbott, choreographed by George Balanchine. Galina Panova as Vera Baronova. Revival, Virginia Theatre, 1983. Published in The New York Times, July 15, 1983. Vertical, 27 × 21 in. (68.2 × 53.2 cm.) HTC 4,148.

Out of This World, musical by Cole Porter, Dwight Taylor, and Reginald Lawrence. David Burns as Niki Skoliamos, Charlotte Greenwood as Juno, Janet Collins, Barbara Ashley, Priscilla Gillette as Helen, William Eythe as Art O'Malley, George Jongeyans as Jupiter, and William Redfield as Mercury. Boston previews for the New Century Theatre,

musical by Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim, and Arthur Laurents. Final scene. George Chakiris as Bernardo, Richard Beymer as Tony, and Russ Tamblyn as Riff. [PUBLICATION, DATE, 1961.] 21 × 27 in. (53.3 × 68.6 cm.) HTC 13,896.

Miscellaneous Theatrical Drawings

"The Author and the Angels." Illustration for *Show Business is No Business* (1951, pp. 44–45). Published in The New York Times, July 29, 1949. India ink and blue wash. Horizontal, 15-1/4 × 24-1/4 in. (38.6 × 64.0 cm.) HTC 4,091.

"Theatre Lobby." First-night audience members include Elsa Maxwell, Marlene Dietrich, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Brooks Atkinson, Bernard Baruch, Dolly Haas, and Al Hirschfeld. [PUBLICATION, DATE] Square, 20-1/8 × 19-3/4 in. (51.2 × 50.2 cm.) HTC 4,065.

"Opening Night Intermission. The Brilliance of a Première is Made Not By the Play But By the Audience." Brooks Atkinson, Sydney Whipple, Julie Haydon, George Jean Nathan, and Paula Laurence. (The artist is seen at the right edge, and Dolly Haas is shown the foreground.) Published in The New York Times Magazine, Sunday, September 29, 1940. India ink and gray wash. Horizontal, 17-3/4 × 25-1/4 in. (45.0 × 64.0 cm.) HTC 4,063.

"Dinner in the Orange Room (The Crowd at Nedick's)." Show business patrons include Fred Allen, Mickey Rooney, Judy Holliday, Tom Meany, and Eddie Davis, served by Gabriel Arias. Published in Collier's Magazine, May 3, 1952. Horizontal, 17-3/4 × 26 in. (45.0 × 66.0 cm.) HTC 4,167.

"The Musical, Represented by a G Clef, Receives a Standing Ovation." Al and Louise Hirschfeld are pictured in the audience. Published in The New York Times, March 23, 1997. Horizontal, 21 × 27 in. (53.3 × 68.5 cm.) HTC 4,158.

Political Drawings

"Nazi Party Manipulates World Leaders." Joseph Goebbels, with Edouard Daladier, Winston Churchill, Anthony Eden, Neville Chamberlain, Ignace Paderewski, and Edvard Benes. Published in The New York Times Magazine, cover, [PUBLICATION DATE], 1939. India ink with

gray wash. Vertical, 24-3/8 × 18-1/4 in. (62.0 × 46.3 cm.) HTC 4,161.

"Italian-British Negotiations May Prepare Ground for World Peace." Published in New Masses, April 5, 1938. Vertical, 19-1/4 × 15-3/4 in. (49.0 × 40.1 cm.) Fogg Art Museum, FAM 1988.438.

"History of the Communist Party." Published in Life magazine, [PUBLICATION DATE], 1939. Horizontal, 22 × 27-1/8 in. (55.8 × 68.8 cm.) Fogg Art Museum, FAM 1988.443.

Sketchbooks

Sketchbook, 1981-1982. Pencil. HTC 4,173.

Sketchbook, 1983-1985. Pencil. HTC 4,175.

Checklist by Fredric Woodbridge Wilson

Revised June 8, 2002